

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

CEREAL HARVEST FORECAST, 1953-54.

Reports on their harvest prospects have been received from 2,855 farmers representing 41% of the total area under crop, and the estimated acreages and yields set forth in this Bulletin are based on these reports. The following summary compares the 1953-54 estimate with the actual results for 1952-53 and the mean of the 10 years ended 1952-53.

		<u>Estimated</u> <u>1953-54</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>1952-53</u>	<u>Mean 10</u> <u>years to</u> <u>1952-53</u>
Wheat - Area	Acres	1,510,000	1,543,762	1,917,982
Yield	Bushels	27,000,000	33,918,689	25,804,172
Average				
Per Acre	Bushels	17.88	21.97	13.45
Barley - Area	Acres	1,035,000	937,521	605,300
Yield	Bushels	24,000,000	25,901,684	12,387,949
Average				
Per Acre	Bushels	23.19	27.63	20.47
Oats - Area	Acres	280,000	369,350	306,540
Yield	Bushels	4,500,000	6,666,420	3,667,581
Average				
Per Acre	Bushels	16.07	18.05	11.96
Rain, April-Nov.	Inches	12.80	15.19	12.07

COMMENTS

Seasonal Conditions - The average rainfall over the Agricultural Areas for April and May was less than half the mean with the result that seeding was delayed. Fortunately, June rains were 50% above the mean and the rains for each of the succeeding months were equal to, or slightly above the mean and - despite the deficiency in April and May - the total April-November falls totalled 12.80 inches compared with the mean of 12.39 inches for the past 48 years. Harvesting conditions are reported to have been very good and the average yield of wheat is expected to be 17.88 bushels, compared with the mean yield over the 48 year period of 11.01 bushels. The maximum yield of 21.97 bushels in 1952-53 was grown on an April-November rainfall of 15.19 inches and the previous highest yield of 18.18 bushels in 1942-43 was grown on 16.11 inches.

Last year also, the conditions at the close of the season were good and the yields of wheat, barley and oats exceeded expectations. It is possible that this year the estimates as shown below again may be exceeded, although even as shown they exceed the averages of the past ten seasons in total yields and yields per acre for each crop.

Wheat. The estimated yield of 27,000,000 bushels is less than the actual yield of 33,918,689 bushels in 1952-53, and the average of 17.88 bushels per acre is less than the 21.97 bushels in that season, but that yield was exceptionally high. The average yield per acre has been exceeded only by the 21.97 bushels in 1952-53 and the 18.18 bushels in 1942-43. The area estimated to have been harvested is 1,510,000 acres compared with 1,543,762 acres in 1952-53. The acreage has fallen from 2,518,948 in 1946-47, and is the lowest since 1895-96. The maximum area was 4,180,513 acres in 1930-31.

Barley. A yield of 24,000,000 bushels is estimated, representing an average of 23.19 bushels per acre. This estimated total yield is less than the record of 25,901,684 bushels last season, but is considerably higher than the previous record of 16,825,996 bushels in 1951-52. The estimated 1,035,000 acres harvested exceeds the previous record of 937,521 acres in 1952-53 and is more than double the 502,005 acres harvested in 1946-47 and partly compensates for the decrease for wheat since that year.

Oats. The estimated total yield is 4,500,000 bushels or an average per acre of 16.07 bushels. The total yield is less than the record of 6,666,420 bushels last season but has been exceeded only in 2 other seasons.

Field Peas. The estimated yield of 400,000 bushels has been exceeded only by the 444,010 bushels in 1952-53, the respective acreages being 22,000 and 24,525. This is the first year in which the field pea crop has been estimated.

Hay. During recent years there have been decreased acreages cut for cereal hay, but there have been increased acreages of meadow hay and of improved pastures. This year, however, there appears to have been a greater acreage of cereal hay cut, the estimated acreage of wheaten barley and oaten hay being 175,000 compared with 152,546 in 1952-53. The estimated yield, however, is only 215,000 tons compared with 222,451, the average per acre being 1.23 tons compared with 1.46.

General. If the above estimates are realised, the total yield of wheat, barley and oats will be 55,500,000 bushels, which has been exceeded only by the record of 66,486,793 bushels last year, the previous record having been 55,094,474 bushels in 1939-40. In 1952-53 the total acreage sown for all purposes for barley and oats exceeded that for wheat for the first time and it is estimated that it will do so again this season. It is estimated that this year the total yield of barley and oats, (28,500,000 bushels) will exceed the yield of wheat (27,000,000 bushels) for the first time.

A.W. BOWDEN,

GOVERNMENT STATIST.

Statistical Office,
ADELAIDE.

21st December, 1953.